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LETTER DATED 25 MAY 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GHANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour, upon instructions, to forward herewith a copy of a statement the Government of Ghana found it necessary to issue in the wake of the latest accusation by the Government of Togo of the involvement of the Government of Ghana in a reported bombing of a restaurant at Lomé on 3 May 1994.

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the statement as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) George O. LAMPTEY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Government statement on Ghana-Togo relations
Friday, 6 May 1994

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is once again concerned about Ghana's relations with its neighbour, Togo, because of recent events in that country. True to its tradition, the Government of Togo has begun a campaign of baseless accusations against Ghana in the face of a crisis that is uniquely the product of Togo's current domestic situation.

On 1 May 1994, the Togolese Foreign Minister summoned Ghana's Chargé d'affaires in Lomé to the Togolese Foreign Ministry at 1930 hours to inform him that his Government was in possession of information that a named Togolese refugee resident in Ghana was using other Togolese youths to carry grenades and other bombs into Togo from Ghana for use in crowded restaurants, bars and nightclubs normally frequented by Europeans. According to the Togolese Foreign Minister, the couriers had succeeded in smuggling the items into Togo by constantly outwitting both Ghanaian and Togolese security officials deployed at the border. He therefore appealed to the Government of Ghana to restrain the named refugee and also assist in putting an end to such activities. No specific evidence of the alleged activity of the individual was furnished to the Chargé d'affaires.

Even before the Government of Ghana could investigate the allegation and contrary to the sensible position he took at the first meeting that he was not laying any blame on Ghana, the Togolese Foreign Minister again summoned the Chargé d'affaires to the Foreign Ministry at 0700 hours on 4 May to lodge a verbal protest against Ghana about a bomb that had allegedly gone off in a restaurant in Lomé the previous day, 3 May 1994, wounding five French nationals and one national of Benin. The Minister claimed that the Government of Ghana had done nothing, as earlier requested, to restrain the said Togolese refugee; forgetting that at his first meeting with the Chargé he had conceded that bombs had already found their way into Togo in circumstances in which Ghana could not be blamed. The Foreign Minister also threatened the anger of France and other foreign Governments against Ghana.

In view of the gravity of the accusation and the irrational and incomprehensible tradition of the Government of Togo of vilifying Ghana whenever convenient to distract attention from the consequences of its policies, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Obed Y. Asamoah, held meetings today, Friday, 6 May 1994, with the Chargés d'affaires of Togo and France, respectively, to reject categorically the protest of the Government of Togo and to warn the Government of Togo against making Ghana the scapegoat for its follies.

The Government of Ghana wishes to make it absolutely clear that it is unable to accept responsibility either for the presence of bombs in Togo or the reported explosion on 3 May 1994, because it has no obligation for security in Togo. Furthermore, it deems it illogical for the Government of Togo to hold Ghana responsible for the particular explosion when the Togolese Foreign Minister himself was the first to admit to the Chargé d'affaires of Ghana, on

1 May 1994, that it was by systematically outwitting the security officials of both Ghana and Togo that the bombs were being smuggled into Togo by Togolese youths.

As the Government of Togo claimed it had evidence about the transportation of bombs across the border, it was in a better position to know the identity of the persons transporting them and of the persons to whom they were being delivered. It was therefore within its power to arrest the persons concerned. Moreover, as the Government of Togo knows of the targets for which the bombs were meant, that is, restaurants, bars and nightclubs frequented by Europeans, the least it could have done would have been to secure them against attack. There cannot be very many places frequented by Europeans. Its failure to do so suggests a cynical and sinister plot to smear the good name of Ghana. This is totally irresponsible and unacceptable.

It is also worth recalling that for several months now the Government of Togo has kept its border with Ghana closed despite repeated appeals to it to respect the obligation that it bears under the system of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to keep it open. In the circumstances, the Government of Togo alone must assume full responsibility for its domestic security.

The present behaviour of the Government of Togo predictably follows its traditional habit of whipping up public animosity against Ghana whenever it faces domestic difficulties so as to divert the attention of the Togolese people and the international community from its foibles; particularly its failure to embrace the democratic culture in all its ramifications. Once again, therefore, the Government of Ghana would like to advise the Government of Togo to look within its own borders for solutions to the grave political and socio-economic problems of its own making. We are tired of the ritual accusations against Ghana.

The Government of Ghana wishes to reiterate its determination to continue to adhere strictly to international law and the principle of good-neighbourliness in its relations with Togo. It hopes that the Government of Togo can also reciprocate this gesture so that our peoples may live in peace and harmony.